

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0892

S E C R E T BONN 03564

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, GW, XF, US

SUBJECT: FRG FONOFF REACTION TO US COMPLAINTS ON EC-
ARAB COOPERATION

1. FRG FONOFF STATE SECRETARY FRANK CALLED IN AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND MARCH 6, PURPORTEDLY TO DENY A DPA REPORT, APPARENTLY ALSO COVERED BY AFP, OF LATE MARCH 5. THE DPA STORY SAID THAT BONN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES WERE ASTOUNDED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE EC PROPOSAL, THAT THE REACTION WAS IN COMPLETE CONTRADICTION TO THE POSITION TAKEN BY SECRETARY KISSINGER FOLLOWING (SIC) THE CONSULTATIONS IN BRUSSELS, AND THAT IT WAS NOW UP TO THE US TO CLARIFY THIS CONTRADICTION. (FYI: THE DPA REPORT CAME OUT TOO LATE MARCH 5 TO MAKE ANY OF THE FRG PAPERS ON MARCH 6. END FYI.)

2. FRANK SAID THE FONOFF HAD CONDUCTED A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION AND COULD STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT THE DPA OR AFP STORY HAD NOT COME FROM ANY FONOFF SOURCE. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AS WELL THAT NOBODY IN THE CHANCELLERY HAD GIVEN ANY SUCH STATEMENT TO DPA OR AFP. FRANK WAS AT PAINS TO PLAY DOWN THE REPORT, REPEATEDLY STRESSING THAT IT REFLECTED NO OFFICIAL OR APPROVED PRESS LINE.

3. FRANK WENT ON TO MUSE ABOUT THE STATE OF US-EC

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RELATIONS IN THE WAKE OF THE MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

SPEAKING RHETORICALLY, HE ASKED WHETHER THE US SIDE HAD SIMPLY MISUNDERSTOOD ALL THAT SCHEEL AND HE HAD SAID ON THE SUBJECT OF THE EC-ARAB COOPERATION PROPOSAL DURING THEIR MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN BONN ON MARCH 3-4.

HE SAID
HE AND SCHEEL HAD CONSIDERED THE TALK WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER MOST POSITIVE. BOTH HAD TRIED TO ENSURE THAT THE SECRETARY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE FRG DID NOT INTEND TO LET THE EC DISTURB US EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE FRG DELEGATION IN BRUSSELS HAD WORKED HARD TO OBTAIN A REASONABLE APPROACH TO THE ARABS, PHASED AND CONTROLLED AND WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE US AT EVERY STAGE. THEY THOUGHT THE SECRETARY HAD ACCEPTED THIS APPROACH AND THUS WERE SURPRISED AT HIS NEGATIVE REACTION IN BRUSSELS AND AT STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN VEST'S COMMENTS ON MARCH 5.

4. FRANK SAID HE WAS AFRAID THAT THE US REACTION, IF IT BECAME TOO STRONG AND PUBLIC, WOULD ONLY MAKE THE EC-ARAB COOPERATION PROPOSAL SEEM MORE IMPORTANT TO THE ARABS THAN IT REALLY WAS: THE FRG DID NOT WANT THIS TO DEVELOP. HE CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING HOPE THAT THE PRESENT PROBLEM WOULD BE OVERCOME BY PATIENT DIPLOMACY AND NOT MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY EXAGGERATED REACTIONS.

5. FOR DEPARTMENT: REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED.
HILLENBRAND

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